

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7149

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: IRVING BROWN GIVES FIRST INTERVIEW

1. SUMMARY. IRVING BROWN MADE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS IN RECENT INTERVIEW: (A) HIS MISSION IN EUROPE IS TO MAINTAIN BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH WE UNIONS; (B) ETUC HAS FAILED TO DEVELOP ACTION PROGRAMS; (C) OECD IS BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT THAN COMMON MARKET BECAUSE OF DOLS25 BILLION SOLIDARITY FUND; AND (D) TREND IN ITALY AND PORTUGAL IS NEGATIVE BECAUSE OF COMMUNIST EXPLOITATION OF LABOR UNITY AND PLAY WITH MILITARY. END SUMMARY.

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2. FEBRUARY ISSUE OF "INTERSOCIAL"; A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR NEWS AVAILABLE BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY, INCLUDES INTERVIEW WITH IRVING BROWN, AFL-CIO REPRESENTATIVE IN EUROPE. HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERVIEW, COPIES OF WHICH WERE SENT TO EUR LABOR ADVISER AND ADDRESSE POSTS, FOLLOW:

A. IN REPLY TO QUESTION WHETHER HIS MISSION IS TO INTERVENE WHENEVER EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS FOLLOW POLICIES WHICH ARE NOT IN ACCORD WITH AFL-CIO PRINCIPLES, BROWN SAID THAT HIS MISSION IS TO MAINTAIN BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH EUROPEAN UNIONS, ADDING THAT "IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE RELATIONS WITH FREE UNIONS EVEN IF THERE IS DISAGREEMENT ON THE QUESTION OF CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST UNIONS. HE CONFIRMED HIS CONTACTS WITH FORCE OUVRIERE, CATEGORICALLY DENIED ANY CONTACTS WITH CGT OR CGIL, ADDING THAT AFL-CIO IS NOT OPPOSED TO CONTACTS WITH CFDT BUT IN PRACTICE THERE HAVE NOT BEEN ANY "BECAUSE OF CFDT SENSITIVITY TO AFL-CIO CRITICISM."

B. HE BELIEVES INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS CAN BE EFFECTIVE ESPECIALLY ON SUCH QUESTIONS AS MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES. HE THOUGHT THAT INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION (CODE OF ETHICS) IS NECESSARY TO REGULATE MCS BUT THERE SHOULD BE FIRST NATIONAL LEGISLATION.

C. HE WAS CRITICAL OF ETUC BECAUSE OF DROP OF WORD "FREE" FROM ITS TITLE, ITS ADMISSION OF CGIL WHICH HE INTERPRETED AS OPENING THE WAY TO ADMISSION OF UNIONS FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, AND FAILURE TO DEVELOP ANY ACTION PROGRAMS.

D. PERHAPS MOST SIGNIFICANT POINT IN BROWN'S INTERVIEW WAS HIS HIGHLIGHTING OF OECD AS OFFERING GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO EUROPEAN UNIONS FOR MEANINGFUL ACTIVITY. HE BASED THIS ON PROSPECT OF OECD BECOMING RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGEMENT OF DOLS25 BILLION "SOLIDARITY FUND" WHICH HE CALLED A SECOND MARSHALL PLAN SINCE IT WILL PLAY INPORTANT ROLE IN STRENGTHENING WESTERN ECONOMIES. HE WENT SO FAR AS TO DESCRIBE OECD AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE COMMON MARKET WHICH HAS LOST SOME OF DRIVE IT HAD AT THE BEGINNING WHEN EUROPE WAS TRYING TO UNITE ITSELF POLITICALLY. WHILE DENYING THAT COMMON MARKET COULD DISAPPEAR, HE MADE THE POINT THAT ITS FUTURE DEPENDS UPON DEVELOPMENT
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OF EUROPEAN POLITICAL UNITY.

E. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT FORTHCOMING EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE, BROWN SAID THAT EE UNIONS ARE NOT REALLY TRADE UNIONS SINCE THEY ARE NOT FREE AND CONFERENCE IS ANOTHER STAGE IN THE EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN LABOR MOVEMENT IN A DIRECTION WHICH THE AFL-CIO REGRETS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT WE ECONOMIC DISARRAY IS A KEY ELEMENT IN THIS CONNECTION AND THAT CONTACTS

WITH COMMUNIST UNIONS UNDERMINE ANY POSSIBILITY OF SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS THROUGH FREE DISCUSSION WITHIN THE FAMILY OF FREE TRADE UNIONS.

F. HE SAW A NEGATIVE TREND IN ITALY AND PORTUGAL. LABOR UNITY IN ITALY, HE SAID, IS A TOOL OF THE COMMUNISTS WHO, ACCORDING TO SOME REPORTS, ARE ALSO KEEPING AN EYE ON THE 360,000 ITALIAN MILITARY. HE WENT ON TO STATE THAT IN A PERIOD OF ECONOMIC DISARRAY THE "ARMY IN OUR SOCIETIES CAN NO LONGER BE REGARDED AS A STABLE ELEMENT" WHICH IS THE REASON FOR WHICH THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING UNITY WITH CGIL WILL FALL SOONER OR LATER IN THE COMMUNIST TRAP. WHILE ASSERTING THAT IT IS UP TO THE ITALIANS TO DO WHAT THEY WANT THE AFL-CIO WILL BE READY TO EXTEND RECOGNITION TO A DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION IF AN ITALIAN FORCE WERE TO SECEDE FROM THE EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS. HE RECALLED AFL-CIO RECOGNITION OF CISL IN 1948 WHEN IT QUIT CGIL.

G. HE CONFIRMED THAT HE HAS VISITED ITALY THREE TIMES IN RESPONSE TO INVITATIONS AND PORTUGAL SHORTLY AFTER THE 25 APRIL COUP WITHOUT AN INVITATION. HE REVEALED THAT WHILE IN LISBON HE VISITED INTERSINDICAL HEADQUARTERS WHERE HE SAW SMALL

COMMITTEE WORKING ON A PROJECT WITH WFTU SECRETARY GENERAL GENSOUS. HE SAW THAT INTERSINDICAL WAS IN COMMUNIST HANDS BUT ADDED THAT "ALL IS NOT FINISHED BECAUSE THERE IS A BEGINNING OF RESISTENCE TO COMMUNIST TACTICS ON PART OF SOCIALISTS AND POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY."

3. SHORT EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW WERE PICKED UP BY AFP BUT SO FAR THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTS OR COMMENTARY IN THE PRESS. HOWEVER, GOF, JOURNALIST AND SOME TRADE UNION CIRCLES ARE COMMENTING PRIVATELY BROWN'S STATEMENTS IN FAVORABLE VEIN.
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